

The Reconquered Jerusalem Represented Tradition and Renewal on Pilgrimage Ampullae from the Crusader Period

Katja Boertjes

Several pewter pilgrimage ampullae whose iconography refers to Jerusalem have been preserved from the second half of the twelfth century. These ampullae enabled crusaders, pilgrims and other visitors of the Holy City to take an ‘image of Jerusalem’ to other places. These images included depictions of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as the Crusaders had rebuilt it in the middle of the twelfth century, but also of events that had taken place in Jerusalem. The custom of decorating objects with images referring to a site of pilgrimage and offering them to pilgrims, who then spread the souvenirs to other regions, was not a new one. Even in the Early Christian period, pilgrims’ ampullae and other souvenirs bearing references to the Holy Sepulchre, or events that had taken place in the Holy Land, were already available there. However, the ampullae from the Crusader period are decidedly different from the earlier ones originating from the Holy City. Tradition alternates with renewal. After a general discussion of the custom of taking souvenirs from Jerusalem from the time of the first pilgrimages, the focus will be on pilgrimage ampullae from the Crusader period. What influence did the presence of the Crusaders in Jerusalem have on the iconography of the ampullae and their distribution to the West?

Relics and Eulogiae

From the time of Constantine the Great onwards, pilgrimage to the Holy Land developed rapidly. Worshippers visited the places where events from the Old and New Testament had taken place. They also wanted to be able to see, worship and even touch the many relics that had been found over the centuries. In Jerusalem, worship was concentrated in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where believers could visit the relic of the True Cross and Christ’s Holy Sepulchre. As more pilgrims came to Jerusalem during the fourth century, the holy places and relics had to be better protected, because fragments of revered objects were popular souvenirs. In some places it was even necessary to place

guards to prevent the theft of relics. Splinters of the wood of the Cross and pieces of rock from Christ's Tomb were particularly in demand. Egeria records in her late fourth-century pilgrim's account that the Cross in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was protected by guards after a pilgrim had bitten a piece of it off when kissing it.¹ At the beginning of the fifth century, almost every region of the Roman Empire possessed fragments of the Cross relic.²

Tangible memories of the holy places could also be obtained by collecting eulogiae or tertiary relics.³ The eulogiae include *naturalia*, 'natural signs', such as a pebble picked up near the Holy Sepulchre, a piece of wood found on the Mount of Olives, water from the river Jordan or natural materials like the rose of Jericho, palm branches or thorns that were picked from the hedges on the Mount of Olives. The eulogiae also include other materials found close to sacred places, like dust that had covered Christ's Tomb, wax from the candles in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre or oil from lamps that burned near Christ's Tomb.⁴ Augustine (354–430) reported that a friend of the former official Hesperus, from the vicinity of Hippo, had taken some sand from the Holy Land for his comrade. Hesperus, who had hung the container with the sand in his bedroom, used it to ward off misfortune.⁵ Antoninus of Piacenza records in his late sixth-century pilgrimage account that visitors to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre could collect two kinds of eulogiae: soil from the Holy Sepulchre and oil from the lamp that burned permanently near the Tomb.⁶ A good example of a collection of eulogiae is the wooden relic box from the treasure chamber of the Capella Sancta Sanctorum of the Lateran, which was painted with five scenes from the Life of Christ in the late sixth century or early seventh century.⁷ The

1 Passage 37, 2. Wilkinson 1981, p. 137.

2 Hunt mentions Syria, Asia Minor, Italy, Gaul and Africa. Hunt 1982, p. 129 and note 6 with acknowledgment of sources.

3 Eulogia (derived from the Greek word "εὐλογία") is used in the sense of 'blessed souvenir' here. The concept of 'eulogia' has more meanings (in a different context). See: Stuiber 1966 for a detailed description. A eulogia's value was based on the belief that the sanctity and sacred power of places, people and objects could be transferred by touch. See e.g.: Vikan 1984. In a more general sense, eulogiae also served as amulets, attracting prosperity and warding off misfortune. The word "εὐλογία" appears on Early Christian pilgrimage ampullae from Jerusalem as well as in written sources.

4 For a detailed study of the eulogiae pilgrims took from the Holy Land, see Bagatti 1949.

5 Hunt 1982, p. 130 and note 9, with a reference to Augustine, *De Civitate dei*, 22, 8.

6 Passage 18, 2–3. See: Milani 1977, p. 142. Antoninus of Piacenza uses the word 'benedictio' in the sense of a souvenir that was taken by a pilgrim as a relic here. See: Vermeer 1965, p. 79.

7 Now in the Museo Sacro in Vatican City, inv. no. 1883 A-B.

original contents of the box consisted of pieces of cloth, soil, stones and wood from sacred places, accompanied by strips of text that show that the various eulogiae came from different places in the Holy Land.⁸

Mass Production

When the onrush of pilgrims kept increasing during the fifth and sixth century, another solution for obtaining a souvenir, which did not involve taking original relics from the place of pilgrimage, arose alongside the phenomenon of tertiary relics: man-made pilgrim souvenirs. These objects were produced on a large scale. They were usually made by means of moulds, which made it possible to produce many identical copies relatively quickly. The quantity and diversity of man-made souvenirs from Jerusalem is unprecedented. Examples are medallions, censers, jugs, small bottles, jewellery and scale models of famous landmarks.⁹ The pewter pilgrimage ampullae form a special group within this category because they combine a mass-produced object with a eulogia. Apart from the ampullae's precious contents, the images depicted on them also played an important role. After all, by transporting ampullae to other places one did not just take a tangible piece of the sacred place elsewhere (both the ampulla itself and its contents) but also an 'image of Jerusalem'. Literally, because the ampullae were decorated with depictions of monuments seen in the Holy City, or of events that had taken place there. The ampulla repeated what the visitors of the Holy City had seen themselves, thus keeping the memory alive.

The ampullae were not only important as visual mementoes of the place the pilgrim or Crusader had visited, they also played an important role in the way visitors to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre experienced their devotion. The images on the ampulla could increase its value as a eulogia. The ampulla might even have been brought into contact with relics or holy places the pilgrim had visited. That is why the iconography of the ampullae did not just emphasize the sacred contents, but also the unique experience the pilgrim or Crusader had had in that place. The ampullae were not complete until the pilgrims supplemented them with their own experiences, especially if the souvenirs

⁸ See: Morey 1926; Vikan 1982, pp. 18–20, Figs 13a-b; *Ornamenta Ecclesiae* 1985, vol. 3, pp. 80–81, no. H8; Kitzinger 1988, p. 60 and p. 61, Fig. 7; Krüger 2000, p. 69, Fig. 69 and p. 70.

⁹ For a more general article on the meaning, appearance and materials of the Jerusalem souvenirs from the Early Christian period to the present day, see Gockerell 1983. The pilgrimage ampullae from the crusader period are not mentioned in this article.

had been filled, blessed and sealed in the presence of the visitors.¹⁰ Images could strengthen the memory of this experience: the combination of the image on and the materials in the ampulla made it easier for the wearer of the souvenir to recall and perhaps even relive the sanctity of the place they had visited, both while travelling and once they had returned home.

A relatively large group of about thirty preserved Early Christian ampullae and approximately twenty-five ampulla sides, made from an alloy of tin and lead,¹¹ refer to Jerusalem and other places in the Holy Land in their iconography. There is a strong resemblance between the ampullae with regard to decoration motifs and shape. The best-known are those in the Museo del Duomo in Monza and the Museo di San Colombano in Bobbio. These two collections can be dated fairly accurately in the period from the middle of the sixth century to the early seventh century on historical grounds. This is why it is generally assumed that similar ampullae were made in the same period.¹² They all have round bellies with detailed images in bas-relief that refer to the New Testament (Fig. 7.1).¹³ The discovery of a casting mould in the village of Siloam, close to Jerusalem, in 1992, revealed that manufacturers also made ampullae with depictions of scenes from the Old Testament.¹⁴ Some bear inscriptions in Greek writing. A suspension is missing. Perhaps a strap was attached to the ampulla's neck, with or without ears to run a string through.¹⁵

10 Hahn 1990, p. 91.

11 Grabar 1958, p. 11, thinks they are made of lead. This misconception has occasionally been adopted in later literature. Material analysis of a number of ampullae has shown that the tin content of the alloy is quite high. See Engemann 1973, p. 7 and note 16 and 17; Engemann 2002, pp. 154–55, note 11.

12 See e.g.: Grabar 1958, p. 14. This dating has been adopted in later literature without discussion.

13 Much has been written about the question of whether or not these images on the pilgrimage ampullae reflect (decorations of) monumental sanctuaries of the *loca sancta* in Jerusalem or the Holy Land. See Smirnov 1897, pp. 90–91; Grabar 1958, pp. 45–50; Ainalov 1961, pp. 225–48, specifically pp. 233–36; Engemann 1973, pp. 22–25; Grigg 1974; Weitzmann 1974, pp. 48–49; Kötzsche-Breitenbruch 1984, p. 232; and Vikan 1995 (with a summary of the discussion on pp. 377–78).

14 The mould, dated in the second half of the sixth century or early seventh century, was used to produce ampullae of the same type as the specimens discussed here. On one side, the Sacrifice of Isaac is depicted, the other side shows Daniel in the Lion's Den. See: Piccirillo 1994.

15 The straps and chains that are now attached to the ampullae in Monza are not authentic. The leather carrying straps around the necks of a number of other ampullae do seem to be authentic, however. See Württembergische Landesmuseum in Stuttgart, inv. nos 1980–205a and 1980–205b; Cleveland Museum of Art, inv. no. 1999.46; private collection



FIGURE 7.1 *Pilgrimage ampulla from Jerusalem with depictions of the worship of the Cross/the Crucifixion (front) and the Women and Angel at the Holy Sepulchre (reverse), second half sixth or early seventh century, pewter alloy, diameter 46 mm. WASHINGTON: DUMBARTON OAKS, INV. NO. 48.18.*

In the existing literature, this group of pilgrimage ampullae is often referred to as 'Palestinian ampullae', indicating that they originate from the Holy Land without ascribing the objects to a specific place of pilgrimage. It seems likely that they were distributed at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, because all images refer to Christ, whose tomb and relics of the True Cross were worshipped with such intensity there. Pilgrims' souvenirs often display scenes from the lives of the saint who is worshipped in the area where they were acquired, even though in many cases those events did not occur in that particular place of pilgrimage. They refer to images that pilgrims would see in church or to stories that the visitors would hear on the spot. Not all images on the ampullae from the Holy Land refer directly to the Holy City, but scenes from Christ's Life in Jerusalem (particularly his death and resurrection) are well presented. That is why Jerusalem is the most likely place of production.

Ampullae from the Crusader Period

There is no record of ampullae originating from the Holy Land between the late seventh and the middle of the twelfth century. During the second half of

Christian Schmidt in Munich, inv. nos 1550 and 1723; Diözesanmuseum in Cologne, inv. no. 1996/436; Menil Collection in Houston, inv. no. 83-024 DJ. See: Kötzsche-Breitenbruch 1984, p. 239 (on the leather straps around the ampullae in Stuttgart) and Engemann 2002, p. 169.

the twelfth century, the production of pewter pilgrimage ampullae in Jerusalem revived – a dating that is mainly based on the way the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is depicted on the souvenirs. The ampullae production in Jerusalem during the Crusader period coincides with the mass production of badges and related materials in various other places of pilgrimage, particularly in Western Europe. However, Jerusalem seems to have been the only place of pilgrimage where pewter pilgrimage ampullae were made in both the Early Christian period and the High Middle Ages. No ampullae have been preserved from both periods from any other place of pilgrimage. The preserved Early Christian specimens that refer to a specific place of pilgrimage all originate from the eastern Mediterranean.¹⁶ After the revival of the tradition in Jerusalem in the middle of the twelfth century, the emphasis of the ampulla production shifts to Western Europe.¹⁷ In the Western places of pilgrimage, the ampullae are less popular than the badges. Nevertheless, they remain a constant factor in the supply of devotional objects in many places of pilgrimage up until, and including, the late Middle Ages. The Crusaders who came to Jerusalem from Western Europe and returned home afterwards undoubtedly contributed to the widespread familiarity with, and the distribution of, the souvenirs in the West.

The twelfth-century ampullae from Jerusalem are not the only ones that can be associated with the Crusaders in the Holy Land, however. It is worth mentioning a unique archaeological find in the Crusader state Acre, which, after the fall of Jerusalem in 1187, became the main pilgrimage centre of the region. Here, pilgrims arrived from Europe and then travelled on to the various sacred places in Syria, Galilee and Jerusalem. In this seaport town, a thirteenth-century workshop was dug up, where pewter pilgrimage ampullae with decorative patterns had been cast. The find included six casting moulds, scraps of lead and other unwrought material, and one ampulla that had already been cast but not finished.¹⁸

16 Early Christian places of pilgrimage from which ampullae whose iconography and/or inscriptions refer to their place of origin have been preserved, are (besides Jerusalem) Karm Abu Mena, Nazareth, Mons Admirabilis, Sergiopolis and Constantinople.

17 In the late twelfth century, Canterbury and Thessaloniki follow. In the thirteenth century Vendôme, Evesham, Burton-upon-Trent, Westminster, Bromholm, Worcester, York, Waltham, Walsingham and Boulogne-sur-Mer; in the fourteenth century, Noyon and Maastricht. The revival of ampulla production in the second half of the twelfth century and the popularity of ampullae in the thirteenth and fourteenth century coincide with the period in which many Christian pilgrimages were undertaken.

18 Syon 1999. According to him, the (moulds for) ampullae do not show a characteristic iconography because they did not serve as pilgrims' souvenirs from one particular place, but because they were meant to be taken from Acre to other sanctuaries in the region.

Five ampullae that were preserved from the Crusader period can be ascribed to Jerusalem on the basis of their iconography. Two of those reside in the Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst in Berlin (Figs 7.2 and 7.5),¹⁹ one in the British Museum in London (Fig. 7.3)²⁰ one in the Malcove Collection in Toronto,²¹ and one in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Fig. 7.4)²² They are all decorated on both sides. To avoid confusion in the descriptions, the terms ‘front’ and ‘reverse’ of the ampullae will be used below. Both sides are of equal importance, however. Images, inscriptions or shape do not indicate that one particular side was considered more important than the other.

Iconography

It is only logical that the Holy Sepulchre was an ubiquitous image on the ampullae from both the Early Christian period *and* the High Middle Ages, but its specific iconography is different in both periods. Three ampullae from the twelfth century show the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in virtually the same way (Figs 7.2–7.4).²³ The building is rendered schematically but is recognizable. Both the interior and exterior are combined in one image. The structure consists of three parts, each with an arch in their interior. Under the central, largest arch lies Christ’s body, wrapped in cloths, on a tomb. He has a nimbus around his head. Above the tomb, a saddle roof or conical dome is depicted. The arch on the left is crowned with a small domed roof with a cross. Above the arch on the right, a three-story tower with a pointed roof rises up. A lamp is suspended from each arch. All this clearly refers to the new Church of the Holy Sepulchre as the Crusaders had rebuilt it in the middle of the twelfth century: with a tall tower (on the right of the ampulla) and a domed roof (on the left of the ampulla). On the ampulla in Berlin, a number of faded, Greek letters can be

Because the ampullae neither originate from Jerusalem nor refer specifically to the Holy City, they will not be discussed here.

- 19 Inv. nos 24/73 and 25/73. Kötzsche 1988, pp. 13–32; Folda 1995, pp. 294–97; *Die Welt von Byzanz* 2004, p. 200, no. 276.
- 20 Inv. no. M&LA 1876, 12–14, 18. Smith 1861, pp. 247–248, pl. xxxix, Fig. 1; Dalton 1901, no. 997; *Byzantium* 1994, p. 187, no. 202.
- 21 Inv. no. M82.210. The Malcove Collection 1985, p. 79, no. 103 (erroneously dated in the sixth century).
- 22 Inv. no. 1999.234. Unpublished.
- 23 One ampulla in the Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst in Berlin, inv. no. 25/73, one in the British Museum in London, inv. no. M&LA 1876, 12–14, 18, and one in the Cleveland Museum of Art, inv. no. 1999.234.



FIGURE 7.2 *Pilgrimage ampulla from Jerusalem with depictions of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (front) and the Women and Angel at the Tomb (reverse), second half twelfth century, pewter alloy, 60 × 46 mm. BERLIN: SKULPTURENSAMMLUNG UND MUSEUM FÜR BYZANTINISCHE KUNST, INV. NO. 25/73.*

seen. They may have spelled O A[ΓΙΟC] ΤΑ[ΦΟC], the Holy Sepulchre.²⁴ The ampullae in London and Cleveland do not bear inscriptions (anymore). The necks of the three ampullae are decorated on both sides with symbolic and decorative patterns including a cross, a patriarchal cross, a zigzag and vines. These motifs vary per ampulla. The combination of vines and a patriarchal cross on both necks of the ampulla in Berlin leads Folda to the observation that this is a reference to the cross as the Tree of Life in the Byzantine tradition. The image might refer to the Golgotha chapel in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.²⁵

For iconographical and historical reasons, Kötzsche dates the souvenirs in Berlin in the period between the consecration of the Crusader church in 1149 and the conquest of Jerusalem in 1189.²⁶ Folda believes that the ampulla in Berlin bearing the image of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was made after circa 1154, when the bell tower was completed.²⁷ This dating can perhaps be specified even further because of the three lamps depicted under the arches.

24 Kötzsche 1988, p. 17.

25 Folda 1995, p. 295.

26 Kötzsche 1988, p. 28; Kötzsche 1995, p. 283.

27 Folda 1995, p. 294. Moreover, for stylistic reasons he thinks the ampullae were made before 1160. Folda 1995, pp. 296–97.

Arnold of Lübeck mentions in his *Chronica Slavorum* that Henry the Lion donated three eternal lamps to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on his pilgrimage to the Holy Land: one for the Holy Sepulchre, one for Golgotha, and one for the Cross relic.²⁸ If the three lamps under the depicted arches refer to these lanterns, the souvenirs must date from after 1175, when the duke undertook his journey. Another possibility is that the lamps refer to the 'holy fire', a ceremony that has taken place on the Saturday before Easter ever since the fourth century. A flame from heaven supposedly comes down and miraculously lights the lanterns above the Holy Sepulchre.

The reverse sides of the three ampullae each show a different scene. One shows the Three Women at the Tomb (Fig. 7.2),²⁹ a theme that was also often depicted on Early Christian ampullae (Fig. 7.1). On the left side of the ampulla, the three women are depicted. According to the Gospels they came to the Tomb early in the morning with spices and aromatic oils to anoint Christ's body, when they noticed that the stone that sealed the Tomb had been moved and the body had disappeared. They are dressed in long garments and have nimbuses around their heads. Behind them, we see buildings that indicate the city of Jerusalem. The woman in front, probably Mary Magdalene, wears a small jug or ampulla. To the right sits an angel, also with a nimbus. He holds a sceptre with a knob in the shape of a fleur-de-lis in his left hand. With his other hand, he points to show the women the empty Tomb on the far right of the ampulla. It has an arched entrance. The angel extends his right wing over the women, who are rendered on a slightly smaller scale. The guards are not depicted. The Greek letters on the ampullae are yet again hard to read. According to Kötzsche, they might form the words $\text{H MHPO } \Phi\Omega[\text{PAI}]$, the carriers of ointment.³⁰ The subject is thematically connected to the front of the ampulla. The image of the building (the Church of the Holy Sepulchre) is linked to an important event that had taken place there. The women were the first to visit Jesus's Tomb and pilgrims visiting the Church of the Holy Sepulchre could identify with them.

On the other side of the second ampulla, two warrior saints are depicted (Fig. 7.3).³¹ Both have a nimbus and are dressed in chain mail. The saints both carry spears in their left hand, and rest their right hand on a shield that stands on the ground. It is possible to deduce from the partly weathered Greek letters next to the soldiers that one of them is Saint George. The other person cannot

28 Baert 2004, p. 187.

29 Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, Berlin, inv. no. 25/73.

30 Kötzsche 1988, p. 19.

31 British Museum, London, inv. no. M&LA 1876, 12–14, 18.



FIGURE 7.3 *Pilgrimage ampulla from Jerusalem with depictions of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (front) and two warrior saints (reverse), second half twelfth century, pewter alloy, 58 × 39 mm.*

LONDON: BRITISH MUSEUM, INV. NO. M&LA 1876, 12-14, 18.

© THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

be identified with certainty anymore, but it is probably saint Demetrius.³² The two warrior saints should undoubtedly be seen in the context of the Crusaders. George is regarded as the patron saint of knights, particularly the Crusaders. Demetrius was also a warrior saint the Crusaders could identify with. Once again we see a connection between the figures depicted on one side of the ampulla and the building on the other. The warrior saints helped the Crusaders see themselves as the protectors of Jerusalem in general and the Holy Sepulchre in particular.

32 Byzantium 1994, p. 187, no. 202. Dalton 1901, p. 176, no. 997, identifies the warrior saints as George and Aetius. From the late twelfth century, ampullae depicting saint Demetrius were in use in Thessaloniki, often combined with an image of another saint. Nevertheless, the ampulla discussed here certainly does not originate from Thessaloniki, but from Jerusalem. The ampullae from the Greek place of pilgrimage are designed differently. They do have a circular belly but the image is surrounded by a decorative band, which the ampulla discussed above lacks. Moreover, the saints on the ampullae from Thessaloniki are invariably only depicted down to the middle of their torsos, while his entire body is shown here. Lastly, the image of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on the front of the ampulla discussed here evidently refers to Jerusalem.



FIGURE 7.4 *Pilgrimage ampulla from Jerusalem with depictions of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (front) and the Descent into Hell (reverse), second half twelfth century, pewter alloy, 43 × 29 mm. CLEVELAND: CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART, INV. NO. 1999.234.*

The reverse of the ampulla in Cleveland shows the Descent into Hell, also called the Descent into Limbo or the Anastasis (Greek for 'resurrection') (Fig. 7.4). Christ descends into limbo after his death, the region between heaven and hell, to free the souls of the Old Testamentary saints. They had died in the period in which there were no Christian sacraments, after all, and where therefore banished to this place, neither heaven nor hell, until Christ would come to free them. With a long garment and a cruciform nimbus, Christ occupies the ampulla's central position. He holds a patriarchal cross in his left hand, while pulling Adam towards him with his right hand. Behind them, Eve holds up her hands in supplication. On the right sit King David and King Solomon, who can be recognized by their crowns. Underneath this image, the underworld is indicated with a few lines. The cross-shaped beams Christ stands on symbolize the gates to the realm of the dead, which he has knocked open. Next to the cruciform nimbus are the Greek letters IC XC, Jesus Christ. A virtually identical depiction of the theme is displayed on the reverse of an ampulla in Berlin (Fig. 7.5).³³ It refers to the deliverance by Christ and mainly occurs in Byzantine

33 Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, Berlin, inv. no. 24/73.



FIGURE 7.5 *Pilgrimage ampulla from Jerusalem with depictions of Christ on the Cross (front) and the Descent into Hell (reverse), second half twelfth century, pewter alloy, 60 × 46 mm. BERLIN: SKULPTURENSAMMLUNG UND MUSEUM FÜR BYZANTINISCHE KUNST, INV. NO. 24/73.*

painting. There is an easy explanation for the fact that the Descent into Hell is depicted on pilgrimage ampullae from Jerusalem and that the theme is linked to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The original martyrium that Empress Helena had built over Christ's Tomb around 326 was called the Anastasis Rotunda because Christ had risen from the dead there. The building, which was later incorporated in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, appears frequently on the Early Christian ampullae (Fig. 7.1). The two ampullae from the Crusader period, however, do not show the building but the story of the Anastasis. This theme, illustrated with Adam and Eve as well as the kings David and Solomon, was not depicted until the ninth century. The scene is thematically linked to the Anastasis and thus to the Anastasis Rotunda, which still formed an important part of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre during the Crusader period.³⁴

The ampulla in Berlin that bears a depiction of the Descent into Hell, shows an image of the Crucifixion on its front (Fig. 7.5). Christ hangs from a cross with broad beams. He is dressed in a long, sleeveless robe that is characteristic of Byzantine art. His head is slightly bent and has a cruciform nimbus around it. Above the horizontal beam are the letters IC XC, Jesus Christ. At the bottom of the cross an arch is seen, with a head-sized object underneath it. It is probably a skull, referring to both Golgotha (place of the skull) and the skull of Adam.

34 Kartsonis 1986, p. 123.

Adam was supposedly buried on the place where Christ was crucified, after all. Mary and John the Evangelist flank the cross. Both have a nimbus and wear long garments. Mary, on Christ's right, has bent her head slightly and lifts – as a sign of grief – her left hand to her cheek, supporting the elbow with the other hand. Between the cross and Mary stands a stick with a sponge, as a reference to the Roman soldier Stephaton, who offered Christ something to drink. Behind Mary, on the far left of the ampulla, we see a building that functions as a schematic representation of the city, Jerusalem. To the left of the crucified Christ stands John. Between them, the lance of the soldier Longinus is depicted. Behind John, a glimpse of the city of Jerusalem can be seen again. Early Christian ampullae also frequently feature depictions of the Crucifixion, but with a different iconography (Fig. 7.1). The combination of the Crucifixion and the Descent into Hell on one ampulla is not surprising. Both themes are closely related to the Passion of Christ as well as to the location of important places in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, namely the Golgotha chapel and the Anastasis Rotunda.

The ampulla in Toronto, lastly, is too weathered to describe in detail. Both sides display a simple cross.³⁵ Any conceivable inscriptions or details are no longer visible, but it would appear that this ampulla also refers to the Crucifixion.

It is clear that the iconography of all ampullae from the Crusader period has to do with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Crusaders, or the events that took place on or near this site. Just like the images on the Early Christian ampullae, the scenes on the medieval ones might refer to images that were shown in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre or to stories that were told there. Kötzsche formulated the plausible theory that the mosaics in the Crusader church may have served as examples for the iconography on the ampullae. Written sources confirm that depictions of the Crucifixion, the Anastasis and the Women at the Tomb were part of the mosaic decoration of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.³⁶

After the Crusades

In Tårnborj (Denmark), a pewter pilgrimage ampulla that refers to two places in the Holy Land was dug up in 1986 (Fig. 7.6). On one side, the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem is depicted. The other side shows the birth of Christ and thus refers to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. The souvenir, currently in the

35 Malcove Collection, Toronto, inv. no. M82.210. The Malcove Collection 1985, p. 79, no. 103.

36 Kötzsche 1988, pp. 21–23.



FIGURE 7.6 *Pilgrimage ampulla from Jerusalem/Bethlehem with depictions of the Angel at the Tomb (front) and the Nativity (reverse), fourteenth century, pewter alloy, 57 × 40 mm. COPENHAGEN: NATIONALMUSEET.
© LENNART LARSEN/THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF DENMARK.*

Nationalmuseet in Copenhagen, is dated in the fourteenth century.³⁷ Both ears have broken off, but their joins are still visible. The front shows an angel at Christ's empty Tomb. The angel, on the left side of the ampulla, wears a long robe and has a nimbus around his head. Opposite him, on the right side of the ampulla, the Holy Sepulchre is shown as a domed monument. The building has a square entrance at the front. In the foreground lie a number of unidentifiable objects.³⁸ The reverse undoubtedly shows a depiction of the Nativity, which took place in Bethlehem. On the left side of the ampulla Mary is shown, while on the right baby Jesus lies in the manger, wrapped in cloths. Behind the manger, a stylized ox and donkey are seen. A divine light seems to shine in the background. Thus the beginning (the Nativity) and the end (the Resurrection) of Christ's Life on earth are displayed on one ampulla, as well as two important locations in the Holy Land.

37 No inv. no. Liebgott 1988, p. 218, no. 11, p. 219, Fig. 21, p. 220, Fig. 22. The sites where the other medieval ampullae were found are unknown.

38 Liebgott 1988, p. 218, suggests that it is an Annunciation scene: the angel would then be Gabriel greeting Mary. The Virgin is absent from the scene, but Liebgott claims she is in the building.

Several written sources also confirm that the custom of bringing back ampullae from the Holy Land still existed after the Crusader period. In an account of his travels, the French nobleman Nompars II describes the souvenirs he bought during his stay in Jerusalem in 1418 to give as presents to his wife and the liege lords and ladies of his estate. Near the end of his summary he mentions an ampulla decorated with palm branches 'filled with water from the river Jordan'.³⁹ Such fifteenth-century ampullae decorated with palm branches have not been found as yet. Friar Felix Fabri from Ulm also brought home a bottle of water from the river Jordan from the Holy Land in the fifteenth century.⁴⁰ What it looked like is not mentioned in his account.

Contents of the Ampullae

It is not only the iconography that makes the ampullae special, but also their contents. As mentioned above, the pilgrimage ampullae form a special group that has its own (extra) practical value within the category of man-made souvenirs. The ampulla *was* not just a tangible memento of Jerusalem, the souvenir also *contained* a memory of the Holy City. That is why the pilgrimage ampullae offer just a bit more than the other souvenirs, like medallions or badges: apart from the fact that they bore images referring to Jerusalem and had perhaps been brought into physical contact with the sacred places, a tangible memory of the place of pilgrimage could be taken along in the ampulla.

Some images on the Early Christian ampullae have Greek circumscriptions that reveal what the original contents were, for instance ΕΛΑΙΟΝ ΕΥΛΟΟ ΖΩΗΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΤΟΠΙΩΝ, oil from the tree of life of the *loca sancta* – which indubitably refers to the wood of the Cross. This type of oil is also mentioned in several written sources. Cyril of Scythopolis (circa 524–558), for one, wrote about oil that had been blessed through contact with the Holy Cross in his *Vita S. Sabæ*. Saint Sabas of Jerusalem used the oil to chase demons from the hill of Castellion, heal a severely ill man, and exorcize the devil from a girl who had been possessed.⁴¹ In 598, Pope Gregory the Great thanked the former consul Leontios for 'oleum [...] sanctæ crucis' he had received from him.⁴² The pilgrim Antoninus of Piacenza was the first to report the use of ampullae in combination with this holy oil. In his description of the worship of the Holy

39 Seigneur de Caumont 1975, p. 139.

40 Prescott 1954, p. 216.

41 Cyril of Scythopolis, *Vita S. Sabæ*, 27, 45, 63. See Festugière 1962, pp. 37, 62, 93.

42 Libro VIII, 33. Gregorii I papæ registrum epistolarum 1893, pp. 35–36.

Cross in the atrium of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, he reports how ampullae, which were half-filled with oil, were blessed in the presence of the wood of the Cross. When the Cross touched the rim of the ampulla, the oil started to foam. If the bottles had not been closed quickly, the oil would have flowed right out again, according to Antoninus.⁴³

What the contents of the pewter pilgrimage ampullae from the Crusader period discussed here were has not been recorded in written sources or inscriptions on ampullae. Moreover, they were all empty when found. We know from various other places of pilgrimage that the contents of the ampullae usually consisted of holy water or oil. There were several sacred springs in the Holy Land, like the one at Emmaus, in which Christ supposedly washed his feet, or the spring in Bethlehem from which Mary drank when fleeing to Egypt.⁴⁴ The river Jordan was also an important part of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, because the river is mentioned several times in the Bible. The river water itself was considered to have healing powers. As mentioned above, friar Felix Fabri brought home a bottle of water from the river Jordan. Another passage from his pilgrim's account reveals that he was not the only one. He saw many people filling small jugs, flasks and glass bottles with water from the river to take with them as a souvenir.⁴⁵ It is unclear whether the pewter pilgrimage ampullae with a reference to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre discussed here were used for taking along this holy water. None of them refer to the river Jordan or any of the springs with healing properties in the Holy Land. The fourteenth-century ampulla in Tårnborg, which refers to Jerusalem *and* Bethlehem, may be linked to the curative spring in Bethlehem, but this cannot be said with certainty.

When it comes to the contents of the ampullae from the Crusader period, it seems more logical to look in the direct vicinity of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, because of their iconography. It is probable that not only the exterior but also the contents followed the Early Christian tradition. During the Crusader period there is no more mention of oil flowing from the Wood of the Cross, however. Close examination of the ampullae that are decorated with a depiction of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre reveals that oil lamps hang above *and* next to the Tomb (Figs 7.2–7.4). The three lanterns that Henry the Lion donated to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in 1172 and the ceremony of the holy fire have already been mentioned above. It is unclear whether the suspended lamps on the ampullae refer specifically to those or if they represent the oil lamps above the Tomb in a more general sense. The fact that these

43 Passage 20, 5–6. See: Milani 1977, pp. 150, 152.

44 Kötting 1980, p. 408 mentions several springs.

45 Prescott 1954, pp. 157–58.

lights are shown so prominently on the small pilgrims' souvenirs *does* indicate that they played a big role in the devotional experience of the pilgrims during the second half of the twelfth century.⁴⁶ It is possible that the visitors of the church took a small amount of sacred oil from one of the lamps that burned near Christ's Tomb to carry with them as a eulogia. The pilgrims' ampullae were perfect containers for a few drops of this liquid. Perhaps the original contents of the ampullae from the Crusader period should be sought in this direction.

The Depiction of Jerusalem on Pilgrimage Ampullae

It is clear that the pilgrims' souvenirs from the Holy City have a long tradition: from relics and eulogiae to mass production. Pilgrimage ampullae originating from Jerusalem from both the Early Christian period and the Middle Ages have been preserved. On the ampullae from the Crusader period, the continuity of the Early Christian tradition is (partly) visible in the choice of the themes that are depicted in bas-relief, the use of Greek letters for the inscriptions, the round shape of the ampullae and the choice of material (an alloy of tin and lead). But it is not surprising that, after several centuries of Persian and Arabic rule, the Early Christian ampulla tradition in Jerusalem did not continue unchanged. The production revived in the second half of the twelfth century, but the designs were different. The ampullae from the Crusader period have broader necks and have – as opposed to the specimens from the Early Christian period – two ears to hang them from. Moreover, the images on the medieval ampullae are fairly schematic and linear, while those on the early specimens are very detailed. The images on the ampullae from the Crusader period are a mix of traditional and innovative iconography. The front and reverse connect elements that can be linked to the location: building (Church of the Holy Sepulchre), event (the Three Women at the Tomb, Christ on the Cross, the Descent into Hell) or people (warrior saints). The narrative scene of the descent into hell (the Anastasis) had not yet occurred in Early Christian times. However, the Anastasis was indicated as a building in that period (the Anastasis Rotunda,

46 These lamps are not only depicted on the ampullae from Jerusalem but also on a number of devotional objects from other places of pilgrimage. For instance on an ampulla from Canterbury (1171–1250) with an image of Thomas à Becket's body lying in state. Three oil lamps are suspended above the bier. Spencer 1998, pp. 63–65, no. 19. A fourteenth-century badge from Saint-Antoine-l'Abbaye shows two oil lamps. They hang above two cripples worshipping St Anthony. Van Beuningen, Koldeweij and Kicken 2001, p. 247, no. 1049.

which Empress Helena had built around 326). Narrative themes like the crucifixion of Christ and the Women at the Empty Tomb *are* depicted in both periods, but in different ways. The tradition of depicting the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on pilgrimage ampullae also continues, but in the Crusader period only a section of the original building with Christ's Tomb was preserved. On later ampullae we see the church as it was rebuilt just before the middle of the twelfth century, on the initiative of the Crusaders, as a powerful symbol of the reconquered Jerusalem. The fact that ampulla manufacturers chose the image of two warrior saints with whom the Crusaders could identify and through whom they could see themselves as protectors of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, is also no doubt connected to (the presence of) the Crusaders in the Holy City.

The influence the Crusaders have had on the appearance of the ampullae from Jerusalem should not be underestimated. The ampullae had become simple yet effective propaganda material as a result of the combination of traditional and innovative elements. They were an adequate means of spreading an 'image' of a new, Christian Jerusalem on a wide scale, a Jerusalem that owed its existence to the conquests of the Crusades. These Crusaders have undoubtedly had their share in the iconography as well as the distribution of (and therefore familiarity with) the pilgrimage ampullae in Western Europe. They had conquered Jerusalem and wanted people in Western Europe to know about the power shift in the Holy Land. The ampullae, decorated with images of the rebuilt Church of the Holy Sepulchre, were an ideal medium for this. The souvenirs were mass-produced quickly and cheaply and their compactness made them easy to take along. The ampullae depicting the new Church of the Holy Sepulchre became the way to spread the image of the Western Jerusalem over a large area.

Bibliography

- Ainalov, D.V., *The Hellenistic Origins of Byzantine Art*, New Brunswick and New Jersey 1961
- Baert, Barbara, *A Heritage of the Holy Wood. The Legend of the True Cross in Text and Image*, Leiden and Boston 2004.
- Bagatti, B., 'Eulogie Palestinesi', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 15 (1949), pp. 126–66. *Byzantium. Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture from British Collections*, ed. by David Buckton, London 1994.
- Dalton, O.M., *Catalogue of the Early Christian Antiquities of the British Museum*, London 1901.

- Die Welt von Byzanz, Europas östliches Erbe. Glanz, Krisen und Fortleben einer tausend-jährigen Kultur*, exhib. cat., ed. by Ludwig Wamser, Munich: Archäologischen Staatssammlung München – Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte/ Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin-Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Stuttgart 2004.
- Engemann, Josef, 'Palästinische frühchristliche Pilgerampullen. Erstveröffentlichungen und Berichtigungen', in: *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 45 (2002), pp. 153–69 and figs 6–10.
- , 'Palästinensische Pilgerampullen im F.J. Dölger-Institut in Bonn', *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 16 (1973), pp. 5–27.
- Festugière, A.-J., *Les moines d'Orient. III/2: Les Moines de Palestine. Cyrille de Scythopolis. Vie de Saint Sabas*, Paris 1962.
- Folda, Jaroslav, *The Art of the Crusaders in the Holy Land, 1098–1187*, Cambridge 1995.
- Gockerell, Nina, 'Pilgerandenken aus Jerusalem', in: *Dona ethnologica Monacensia: Leopold Kretzenbacher zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. by Helge Gerndt, Klaus Roth and Georg R. Schroubek, Munich 1983, pp. 163–79.
- Grabar, André, *Les ampoules de Terre Sainte (Monza-Bobbio)*, Paris 1958.
- Gregorii I papae registrum epistolarum. Tom. II, pars I, Libri VIII-IX (Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Epistolae)*, ed. by Ludo Moritz Hartmann and Paul Ewald, Berlin 1893.
- Grigg, Robert John, *The images on the Palestinian Flasks as Possible Evidence of the Monumental Decoration of Palestinian Martyria*, Minneapolis 1974.
- Hahn, Cynthia, 'Loca Sancta Souvenirs: Sealing the Pilgrim's Experience', in: *The Blessings of Pilgrimage*, Illinois Byzantine Studies I, ed. by Robert Ousterhout, Urbana and Chicago 1990, pp. 85–96.
- Hunt, E.D., *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire AD 312–460*, Oxford 1982.
- Kartsonis, A.D., *Anastasis. The Making of an Image*, Princeton 1986.
- Kitzinger, Ernst, 'Reflections on the feast cycle in Byzantine art', *Cahiers archéologiques*, 36 (1988), pp. 51–73.
- Kötting, Bernhard, *Peregrinatio Religiosa. Wallfahrten in der Antike und das Pilgerwesen in der alten Kirche*, Münster 1980.
- Kötzsche, Lieselotte, 'Das heilige Grab in Jerusalem und seine Nachfolge', in: *Akten des XII. Internationalen Kongresses für christliche Archäologie, Bonn, 22.-28. September 1991*, *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*, Ergänzungsband 20, 3 vols, ed. by Ernst Dassmann and Josef Engemann, vol. 1, Münster 1995, pp. 272–90.
- , 'Zwei Jerusalem Pilgerampullen aus der Kreuzfahrerzeit', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 51 (1988), pp. 13–32.
- Kötzsche-Breitenbruch, Lieselotte, 'Pilgerandenken aus dem Heiligen Land. Drei Neuerwerbungen des Württembergischen Landesmuseums in Stuttgart', *Vivarium. Festschrift Theodor Klauser, zum 90. Geburtstag. Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 11 (1984), pp. 229–46.

- Krüger, Jürgen, *Die Grabeskirche zu Jerusalem. Geschichte, Gestalt, Bedeutung*, Regensburg 2000.
- Liebgott, Niels-Knud, 'Metaldetektorer og middelalderens fromhedsliv', in: *Festskrift til Olaf Olsen*, Copenhagen 1988, pp. 208–22.
- The Malcove Collection. A Catalogue of the Objects in the Lillian Malcove Collection of the University of Toronto*, ed. by Sheila D. Campbell, Toronto 1985.
- Milani, Celestina, *Itinerarium Antonini Placentini. Un viaggio in Terra Santa del 560–570 d.C.*, Milan 1977.
- Morey, Charles, 'The painted panel of the Sancta Sanctorum', in: *Festschrift zum sechzigsten Geburtstag von Paul Clemen 31. Oktober 1926*, Bonn 1926, pp. 150–67.
- Ornamenta Ecclesiae. Kunst und Künstler der Romanik in Köln*, exhib. cat., ed. by Anton Legner, Cologne: Schnütgen-Museums in der Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle 1985.
- Piccirillo, Michele, 'Uno Stampo per Eulogia Trovato a Gerusalemme', *Liber Annuus* 44 (1994), pp. 585–90.
- Prescott, Hilda Frances Margaret, *Jerusalem Journey. Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the Fifteenth Century*, London 1954.
- Seigneur de Caumont. Le voyage d'outremer en Jherusalem*, ed. by Peter Scott Noble, Oxford 1975.
- Smirnov, J.I., 'Hristianskija mozaiki Kipra', *Vizantinskij Vremennik*, 4 (1897), pp. 90–92.
- Smith, Charles Roach, *Collectanea Antiqua. Etchings and Notices of Ancient Remains, Illustrative of the Habits, Customs, and History of Past Ages*, part 5, London 1861.
- Spencer, Brian, *Medieval finds from excavations in London. 7. Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges*, London 1998.
- Stuiber, Alfred, 'Eulogia', in: *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum. Sachwörterbuch zur Auseinandersetzung des Christentums mit der antiken Welt*, 6, ed. by Theodor Klauser, Stuttgart 1966, cc. 900–28.
- Syon, Danny, 'Souvenirs from the Holy Land. A Crusader Workshop of Lead Ampullae from Acre', in: *Knights of the Holy Land. The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem*, ed. by Silvia Rozenberg, Jerusalem 1999, pp. 111–15.
- Van Beuningen, H.J.E., A.M.Koldewey, and D. Kicken, *Heilig en Profaan 2. 1200 Laatmiddeleeuwse insignes uit openbare en particuliere collecties*, Rotterdam Papers 12, Cothen 2001.
- Vermeer, G.F.M., *Observations sur le vocabulaire du pèlerinage chez Égérie et chez Antonin de Plaisance*, Nijmegen and Utrecht 1965.
- Vikan, Gary, 'Art, Medicine and Magic in Early Byzantium', in: *Dumbarton Oaks Symposium 1983: Byzantine Medicine*, ed. by John Scarborough, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 38 (1984), pp. 65–86.
- , *Byzantine Pilgrimage Art*, Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Collection 5, Washington 1982.

- , 'Early Byzantine Pilgrimage *Devotionalia* as Evidence of the Appearance of Pilgrimage Shrines', in: *Akten des XII. Internationalen Kongresses für christliche Archäologie, Bonn, 22.-28. September 1991 (Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Ergänzungsband 20, 3 vols)*, ed. by Ernst Dassmann and Josef Engemann, vol. 1, Münster 1995, pp. 377–88.
- Weitzmann, Kurt, 'Loca Sancta and the Representational Arts of Palestine', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 28 (1974), pp. 31–55.
- Wilkinson, John, *Egeria's Travels to the Holy Land*, Jerusalem and Warminster 1981.